



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Rob Rolison

Senator Rolison Bill Requiring Public Hearings on Utility Rate Increases Advances in New York State Senate

ROB ROLISON May 15, 2025

Legislation sponsored by Senator Rob Rolison (SD-39) that would require public hearings before utility companies raise rates has advanced through the Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee and was referred to the Consumer Protection Committee on Tuesday.

Senate bill S980 mandates that in any case where the Public Service Commission (PSC) is considering an increase in rates, fees, or charges imposed by a utility company, a public hearing must be held within the affected region at least 90 days prior to a final decision. The hearing must allow for public comment and include an opportunity for community members to ask questions of both the commission and the utility company.

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“As the Hudson Valley continues to struggle with rising costs, utility rate hikes should never be decided behind closed doors,” said Senator Rolison. “This legislation ensures that families and small businesses have a voice when decisions are being made about the bills they pay every month. We need to strengthen public oversight and give our residents a seat at the table when their cost of living is on the line.”

The bill's advancement comes at a critical time, as Central Hudson, one of the Hudson Valley's primary energy suppliers, has **applied** for another delivery rate increase plan. Under the proposal, the average electric customer's bill would rise by \$5.43 per month (a 3.12% increase) in the first year, while natural gas customers would see an increase of \$7.73 per month (a 5.19% hike). If approved by the State Public Service Commission, the new rates could take effect as soon as the first of the month following the commission's decision.

Rolison, a strong advocate for transparency and affordability, emphasized the need for public accountability in utility regulation. Senate Bill S980 now awaits further consideration in the Senate Consumer Protection Committee.